

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR PLANNING BOARD MEETING
MONDAY, MAY 11, 2009
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL
2263 SANTA CLARA AVENUE – 7:00 PM**

President Kohlstrand called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.

FLAG SALUTE: Board Member Cunningham

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: President Kohlstrand, Vice-President Ezzy Ashcraft, Board members Cook and Cunningham. Board member Lynch arrived later.

ABSENT: Board members Autorino and McNamara.

STAFF PRESENT: Andrew Thomas, Planning Services Manager/Secretary to the Planning Board; Assistant City Attorney Mohammed Hill; Nancy McPeak, Executive Assistant/Recording Secretary

MINUTES:

Minutes from the meeting of March 9, 2009. (pending)

Minutes from the meeting of March 23, 2009 (pending)

Minutes from the meeting of April 27, 2009 (pending)

5. AGENDA CHANGES AND DISCUSSION:
NONE

6. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS:

Written Report

6-A. Future Agendas- Staff presented the report.

6-B Zoning Administrator Report-The Zoning Administrator approved a Variance for 3110 San Jose Avenue for a deck in the side yard at the meeting of May 5, 2009 was canceled.

President Kohlstrand requested information on how the workforce reduction will impact the workplan for the upcoming year.

Board member Cook stated her condolences for those staff who are impacted by the workforce reduction, thanked them for their dedication and professionalism in ensuring

planning for the City of Alameda, and raised her concerns about the future lack of long-range planning due to the layoff of staff.

Vice-President Ezzy Ashcraft seconded Cooks statements and thanked all staff for their dedication and thanked the attorney for his services with the Planning Board.

7. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

- * Anyone may address the Board on a topic not on the agenda under this item by submitting a speaker's information slip, subject to the 5-minute time limit.

NONE

8. CONSENT CALENDAR:

- 8-A Zoning Text Amendment – Applicant – City of Alameda. The Planning Board will conduct a hearing** a consider a recommendation to the City Council on a proposed amendment to the City of Alameda Municipal Code off-street parking regulations. (AT) Staff is requesting a continuance of this item to a future meeting date.

Board member Cook motioned to continue/Vice-President Ezzy Ashcraft seconded the consent agenda item. Motioned carried 4-0-2. (4 approved – 0 Noes – 2 absent)

9. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS:

- 9-A Consideration of a Zoning Overlay District – PLN08-0194 – Limiting the Size of Two-Story Residential Buildings – Applicant – City of Alameda.** The Planning Board will conduct a hearing to consider proposed limitations on height and size of two-story residential buildings and new design standards for structures located within the area shown on the map below. (DG). Continued from the meeting of April 27, 2009. Staff presented a Power Point presentation outlining the project.

Staff presented the staff report and presented a powerpoint presentation.

Board member Lynch asked about the genesis of staff's recommendation to move away from a specific district for the Fernside area to amending the Design Guidelines city-wide to ensure good design for second story additions of ranch-style homes. He stated his concerns about the public involvement process for a city-wide design guidelines.

Vice-President Ezzy Ashcraft welcomed comments from the public who live in single-story homes that are now located next to the second-story ranch-style homes to give the Planning Board a better understanding of the relevant issues.

President Kohlstrand opened the public comment period.

E. Wong is in favor of restrictions to limit second-story additions. She is opposed to any second-story additions on ranch-style homes, as it would reduce home values in the area and would reduce light to adjacent homes.

N. Lew is opposed to limitations on additions for ranch-style homes. She also commented that the original petition was changed to more restrictive limitations, which was then submitted to the City.

J. Kowskie is opposed to limitations that would prevent her from adding space to her home in the future.

President Kohlstrand closed the public comment period.

President Kohlstrand asked staff if those petitioners who initiated the overlay are still in contact with staff, which staff was unaware of as the project planner staff was impacted by the reduction in workforce.

Board member Cunningham asked if other neighborhoods had any area specific restrictions as proposed for the Fernside district. He also questioned whether the restrictions would really generate the desired design effect for that area and if the new guidelines would restrain civil liberties of property owners, who purchased properties with the idea that they could add habitable space in the future.

Staff responded that the design review guidelines, adopted in 2005, and general development regulations provide a mechanism to promote good design. There were no other specific regulations for other areas.

Vice-President Ezzy Ashcraft welcomed augmenting the design guidelines to include better recommendations that address ranch-style homes.

Board member Cook also supports augmenting the design guidelines, discussed key design elements of ranch-style homes and pointed out that the City of Alameda mainly has modified ranch-style homes opposed to true ranch-style homes. She feels that the design guidelines need to address these design nuances.

Board member Lynch pointed out the amount of time and staff effort spent on the 'ranches overlay' has been significant and would like to move this project forward.

Staff explained the options laid out in the staff report: a) Do not apply a new zoning overlay to this area, b) Augment the residential design guidelines to add ranch-style design guidelines that can be applied city-wide, which would require additional noticing and public input.

President Kohlstrand agrees with other board members that downzoning this area is not a path the City should pursue. She supports amending the design guidelines for ranch-style homes, but she pointed out that many homes in Alameda defy any specific

architectural type, which currently cannot find any guidance in the guidelines. Therefore, she recommended adding a section that would address adding additions to these homes that do not fall into any one architectural type.

Board member Cunningham commended the layout and graphics of the ranch-style guidelines and requested that the guidelines not focus on making recommendations on internal layout of ranch-style homes.

Vice-President Ezzy Ashcraft believes that the City needs stronger design guidelines that can assist staff to approve good design and asked Board member Cunningham how that can generally be achieved in the guidelines. She also pointed out that the guidelines should address maintaining privacy of adjacent property owners for new openings.

President Kohlstrand proposed that the Planning Board not recommend rezoning for this area to City Council. In addition, considering the reduction in workforce, she recommended that staff prioritize adding the ranch-style guidelines into the existing city-wide guidelines.

Board member Lynch supports changing the guidelines, although he anticipates that it will require significant staff time in the future. He therefore, in the interim, supports staff to continue to utilize common sense and staff experience to d

Board member Cunningham motioned to recommend denial of the overlay to City Council, and approval of adding ranch-style residential design guidelines to the existing residential design guidelines, pending a city-wide vetting process. Vice-President Ezzy Ashcraft seconded the motions. Motions carried 4-0-2.

9-B. Design Review – DR05-0132 for a new single-family dwelling – 3295 Adams Street. The applicant proposed to construct an approximately 2,700 square foot, two-story single family dwelling with a 417 square foot attached garage on a vacant, 5,172 square foot lot. (DG). **Continued from the meeting of April 27, 2009.**

Staff presented the staff report and a powerpoint presentation.

Board member Lynch asked what permits had been paid for so far. Staff responded that the applicant had submitted a Design Review application, as presented today.

President Kohlstrand opened the public comment period.

The applicant stated his intentions for this project.

V. Quintell stated he did not receive a public notice and that the project did not receive adequate public involvement.

A. Quintell urged the Planning Board to not approve the project as it is too large, and takes away privacy and impacts access to sunlight

President Kohlstrand closed the public comment period.

Board member Lynch asked staff to clarify the development regulations for this area, as well as the location for the project as proposed. He recommended that the applicant consider moving the house closer to the street-side to reduce shadowing of the adjacent neighbor.

Board member Cook supported this notion and commented that the massing of the building would be moved away from the adjacent neighbor.

Vice-President Ezzy Ashcraft supports the development of a home, even a two-story home on this lot, but has concerns about the design of the structure. She recommends reviewing the design guidelines on page 9 and applying these principles to the design of the building.

Board member Cunningham made recommendations on the design that would reduce the massing of the building, with the result of making it blend into the residential neighborhood. He also recommended applying different siding materials to add visual interest to the building.

Board member Cook and Lynch made comments on the design recommending another revision to the design.

The applicant clarified that the Jarvis Architects developed the shade study, but that he had designed the building. He welcomed making changes to the design, as long as the process would not get delayed and stalled any further than it already had in the past.

Board member Cunningham recommended introducing material variety along the different stories, to break up the blank building façade along Fernside Blvd.

President Kohlstrand requested that the applicant redesign the project, and renoticed the neighborhoods, with making a special effort to notice the Quintells.

Board member Cunningham motioned to continue the project to a future date, pending revisions of the design, seconded by Board member Cook. Motion passed 4-0-2.

10. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

Transmittal of Alameda Point Revitalization Initiative

Board member Lynch requested that staff check if he needs to excuse himself from anything dealing with Alameda Point due to the fact that he has hired a consultant who is also contracted with SunCal.

11. BOARD COMMUNICATIONS:

Board members may ask a question for clarification, make a brief announcement or make a brief report on his or her activities. In addition, the Board may provide a referral to staff or other resources for factual information, request staff to report back to the body at a subsequent meeting concerning a City matter or, through the chair, direct staff to place a request to agendize a matter of business on a future agenda.

Board member Cook attended the Climate Action Summit on behalf of the Planning Board and passed on the information collected at the Summit.

12. ADJOURNMENT:

9:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Thomas, Secretary
City Planning Board

This meeting was audio and video taped.